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NEWS RELEASE

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GANG MEMBER SENTENCED TO FEDERAL PRISON

Christopher Torres, 24, a member of the West Side Loma street gang, will serve 37 months in prison for unlawful possession of a firearm, U.S. Attorney Tom Moss announced on Friday.

Torres was arrested in Caldwell on August 28, 2007, after Caldwell Street Crimes officers found him in possession of .38 pistol. At the time of his arrest, he had been out of prison for just seven weeks, after serving three years on a possession of a controlled substance charge.

Torres had been documented in Canyon County as a member of the West Side Loma street gang.

Torres pleaded guilty in federal court to one count of unlawful possession of a firearm on February 26, 2008. He was sentenced May 30, 2008, by Senior U.S. District Judge John C. Coughenour, a visiting judge from the Western District of Washington, at the U.S. Federal Courthouse in Boise. Officers from the Caldwell Street Crimes Unit testified at his sentencing and described Torres' arrest. Officer Larry Hemmert testified that he had received a citizen report that Torres was in possession of a firearm earlier in the day. When the officer approached, Torres reached for a gun and a struggle ensued. Torres had a loaded and cocked .38 pistol in his back pocket along with a small amount of methamphetamine. Officer Joey Hoadley was called to testify about a prior incident in 2004, where Torres fought with police and tried to pull a knife on the officer. During the struggle, Torres had yelled to his friends in a nearby vehicle to shoot the officer. Torres was subsequently convicted of battery on a law enforcement officer and carrying a concealed weapon. Torres had previously been convicted of 11 prior offenses. The

judge sentenced Torres to serve 37 months in federal prison, three years of supervised release and pay a \$100 special assessment. Because there is no federal facility in Idaho, the defendant will serve his sentence outside of the state.

Torres was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the Caldwell Street Crimes Unit. He was prosecuted by the Special Assistant United States Attorney hired by the Treasure Valley Partners and the Idaho Attorney General's Office to combat gang-related crime in Idaho.

"The U.S. Attorney's Office takes the safety of our local law enforcement very seriously. Those who seek to harm these dedicated public servants will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law," Moss said.
